

## THE ROLE OF AYURVEDA IN CRITICAL CONDITIONS

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Ayurveda, the science of life is competent enough to deal with emergency medicine. The common notion in present scenario about inefficiency of Ayurveda in tackling emergency is defied by the AYUSH practitioners who are successfully running their clinics in the field and establishing the epitome of Ayurveda as timeless system of medicine. **Materials and Methods:** The classics where the concerned subject has been opined was collected, compiled and thoroughly analysed. There are many examples opined in the classics directly where the seers have emphasized the importance of emergency treatment saving the lives of the patient concerned. The impact of contemporary system of medicine in this stream is much higher due to adoption of newer technologies, machines and non-invasive techniques but admonishing Ayurveda health system in this perspective is a straight prejudice based monopoly by the system and it certainly has to be banish by the textual references and practical approach by people of Ayurveda fraternity. The concept of vikara vighat bhavaabhava ~ (co relation of etiological factors, body humors and tissues), updrava ~ (complications of a disease), categorical description of diseases as mridu and daruna, sadhyovrana ~ (ulcers and wounds), bhagna ~ (fractures), antra vidradi ~ (abscess), agni dagda ~ (burns), sarpavisha dansh ~ (snake bite) are mere such examples clearly indicating the emergency situations and the management towards them. **Conclusion:** The scientific principles of handling emergency in classical compendium were the researches done ages ago by the seers. The current advances in exertions of ayurveda globalization demands the need of scientific evidence as per international norms. The new strategies planned by the Govt. to promote ayurveda should be directed in this light so that the world can also see the hidden credentials of this science.

**Keywords:** emergency, ayurveda, medicine, critical.

### INTRODUCTION:

There is a big gap observed in ayurvedic literature. This gap may be due to dark medieval period which was approximately of 2000 years. During this time period there were many invasions, and probably this is the reason of break to the development of Ayurvedic science. All the ancient literature we get is outrageous work of a few scholars.

Many books were destroyed during the medieval period and the references from other books opines their contribution to the science. Here an example can be given of *Bhavyaprakasha*, there is description of 33 types of *Sannipat Jwara*, which are described in other Ayurvedic texts that are not available today. The description of *Sannipat Jwara* is the description and treatment of acute febrile emergencies.

Pathogenesis of acute emergencies in general how acute emergencies take place or arise is a question which is not solved in modern science. Ayurvedic has thought of emergencies in general and in diseases also. While dealing with “*Vikara-Vighat-Bhavaabhava*” i.e. incidence or non-incidence or suppression of diseases, *Charaka* has dealt with emergencies. *Charaka* says, ‘Occurrence or suppression of diseases occurs as a result of variations in Nidan (Chronological factors) intensity of *Doshas* and susceptibility of *Dhatus*’.<sup>1</sup>

Further *Charaka* says, ‘If these three factors do not mutually associate or if they do so after a long lapse of time or in a mild form, either there occurs no manifestation of diseases at

all or the disease takes a long period to evolve or appears in an ambulatory or abortive form. Under the contrary conditions, there occur contrary results.’ *Chakrapani* commencing on the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase clear that when these 3 factors viz. *Nidan* (etiological factors), *Dosha* and *Dushyas* (body elements) unite or associates, rapidly associate super strongly, produce diseases very rapidly or with strong manifestations of diseases or with all the signs and symptoms of the diseases. This condition is called acute diseases or emergency.<sup>2</sup>

Thus when the etiological factor is powerful, the association or *morbiding* of *doshas* is also very great. Both these factors vitiate the body, elements or *Dhatus* rapidly. This rapid *morbiding* is called emergency or acute condition of disease.

### UNDERSTANDING EMERGENCY AS A COMPLICATION

*Charaka*, opines ‘*Upadrava*’ (complication) says ‘complication is more troublesome than the main disease itself because it appears in the later stages of disease, when the body is already weakened by the previous disease. Hence the physician should be prompt in the treatment of upadrav as (Complications).’<sup>3</sup> This sutra also clears the condition of emergency. This means that due to lack of resistance powerful complications arise and emergency treatment should be started.

*Charaka*, in the Chapter ‘*Roganeeka*’ Viman 6, divides diseases in many different ways like effect, intensity, seat of affection, cause, seat of origin etc. In these divisions, one of

the groups is Mridu (mild) and Daruna (severe). Here Daruna means acute condition or emergency.<sup>4</sup>

Regarding the classification of Mridu (mild) and Daruna (severe) *Charaka* has a clear concept of curable or incurable diseases. Mridu, Daruna and Sadhya, Asadhya diseases are different. He uses the term Daruna where the disease is acute or requires prompt treatment. Daruna does not mean incurable. That is why *Charaka* says 'There are many such diseases which though acute and severe are yet curable. They may kill the patient if they are either not treated at all or wrongfully treated.' This clearly states the condition of emergency which requires prompt and accurate treatment.<sup>5</sup>

Acharyas have often warned the treating physicians to start prompt treatment by using the terms 'Twaraya Jayet'. All having the meaning of prompt treatment. Not only this, Bhavamishra has given a special tribute to the physician. The physician who saves a patient, drowning in the ocean of sannipat, what religion he has not performed (He has done all the religious duties) and what praise he is not fit for (He is praise worthy in all respects) because the physician has to fight against death. He who conquers such an emergency is really the conqueror of all diseases'. With this expression Bhavamishra has not only appreciated the physician but has placed the physician in the position of God of Health. Ayurveda has, thus, given top priority for treating emergency conditions.

## EMERGENCY CONDITIONS IN DAY TO DAY GENERAL PRACTICE

There are three types of emergencies viz. medical emergency in which the treatment can be given with only medicines. Certain are surgical where surgical interference is necessary and third are Gynaecological emergencies. One more emergencies may be added with these types of emergencies and that may lead to medico-legal complication burns, poisoning etc. unless authorized, a general practitioner is advised not to treat such cases because that may lead to medico-legal complications.

The duty of an ayurvedic physician in emergencies Ayurveda deals with the subject of emergencies in detail. The physician should be well – conversant with the present condition and also for the prognosis; he should explain everything to the satisfaction of the patient and his relatives and start treatment with courage and confidence. In surgical and gynaecological emergencies, if the physician is trained handle the patient, he can do so; but if is not trained to surgical and gynaecological operations; it is the duty of the physician to diagnose the disease, refer to the proper surgeon or gynaecologist. But he should give preliminary treatment so that the condition may not be deteriorated and the patient may feel relief.

## EMERGENCIES MANAGEMENT OF DISEASES

There are some of the diseases *Agni dagdha*,<sup>7</sup> *Sarpa Damsha*,<sup>8</sup> *Vrichika Damsha*,<sup>9</sup> described in classics which require prompt and careful treatment. *Charaka* opines 'This is quite adequate for the average physicians for the practical purpose of treatment; for the highly intelligent, who are proficient in the art of inference; it will serve as a guiding principal for the comprehensive knowledge, not mentioned here.

## CONCLUSION

Ayurveda, the eternal holistic science has a long way to go to justify its role in emergency medicine, for that one has to try to understand thoroughly the sutras of Ayurveda in the modern light through current methodologies, to put them in practice and keep a thorough follow up, to publish whatever has been gained in practice; making it evidence based science which is the need of the hour as the world recognizes it on scientific grounds. Ayush practitioners need to boost themselves with skilled practice of this science and have full faith in their practice which has wondrous results if applied scientifically. The last but not the least to work with courage and confidence. We need compliance to face the world and come up as establishing this science an effective part of CAM system according to the global needs.

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